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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet discusses some beginning approaches and technological approaches to reading instruction, and the relationship between children's language and reading. The first section looks at several approaches to reading instruction: "The Language Experience Approach," "The Initial Teaching Alphabet," "Linguistic Approaches to Reading," "Programed Instruction with Reading Materials," "Words in Color," "Special Reading Series for Disadvantaged Urban Children," and "Technological Approaches to Reading: The Talking Typewriter and the Computer," Part II discusses "Children's Language and Their Reading." (WR)

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SOME APPROACHES TO READING

ACE

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International

Some Approaches to Reading

by

NILA BANTON SMITH and RUTH STRICKLAND

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CREDO OF THE AUTHORS

We believe:

- that the development of the several new approaches to reading is a healthy sign of progress.
- that there are historical cycles in many reading methods and materials and that both improve with the appearance of the method in each of its successive cycles.
- that reading is but one strand in the total communication process and that the teaching of reading can be reinforced when taught in close relationship to the other communication processes, viz: speaking, listening, composing, spelling and writing.
- that there is not, and never will be, any one method for teaching *all* children to read.
- that teachers should become acquainted with many different approaches to reading and should experiment in using different ones.
- that teachers should use different approaches in terms of the different needs and styles of learning of different children.
- that teachers should continuously keep themselves informed in regard to research conducted with the different methods, and should carefully consider the pros and cons resulting from several investigations rather than accept the results of a single study.

Nila B. Smith

Ruth Strickland

PART I

Introduction

We are living in an age of explosions. There is a knowledge explosion, a transportation explosion, a communication explosion, a psychological explosion, a medical explosion, and an educational explosion, of which reading is a part.

This reading explosion has been responsible during the short span of our present decade for an outcropping of many new approaches in popular magazines and educational journals. They are hearing about them at educational meetings and in TV programs. Through all these media, opinions on each of the new approaches are expressed both by proponents and opponents.

Some teachers are trying out one of the innovations in their own classrooms. Others are wondering if they should experiment with one or more of these approaches. All are asking questions and seeking information. It is in response to this situation that the following discussion on *Some Approaches to Reading* was prepared. --N.B.S.

A Look at Several Approaches

by NILA BANTON SMITH

The Language Experience Approach

NO ONE CAN DENY the soundness of the theory back of the Language Experience Approach. The communication strands of listening, speaking, writing and reading are irrevocably bound together. In the Language Experience Approach reading is taught as it is interwoven throughout the fabric of the over-all communication complex.

Background and Evolution

This method and several other of the innovations described in this pamphlet have had their roots in the past. There are such things as cycles in reading. A new method is born, attracts attention, flourishes for a time, then fades away. Nothing more is heard of it perhaps for decades, possibly even for centuries. Then suddenly it comes back again improved in method and format. This time it stays for a longer period and is used in teaching larger numbers of children. Thus cycles in reading method continue to evolve, revolve and improve. This is the way of progress in reading.

The Language Experience Approach has its roots far back in antiquity. The human race used this method in its early communications. No doubt primitive man first learned to listen and to speak as children first learn to listen and to speak in our present civilization. Finally, when the time came at which early man felt compellingly the need for communicating something he had experienced to others too distant in space or time for speaking to them directly, he devised characers to represent unis of language and fellow man learned to read them. So must children at present learn to read language characters in messages written by people too far away for the children to speak to them or listen to them.

As early textbooks evolved, spelling and writing were taught as a part of reading instruction. Eventually, however, with specialization in our school curriculums, a separate period was set aside each day for teaching spelling, penmanship, reading and composition. The learning of each of these skills was supposed to proceed in its own watertight compartment as an entity.

But things are changing and once again we are striving to teach the language skills in relationship to one another and in more natural situations approximating those which caused the different skill strands to develop together in the first

place. The Language Experience Approach is an excellent example of teaching reading as a part of the total communication process. However, other innovations described in this pamphlet and some of the recent series of readers make much more use than formerly of composition, handwriting and spelling in their programs. Perhaps history is repeating itself or at least offering promising perspective.

Method Used in the Language Experience Approach

The method used in teaching by the Language Experience Approach is stated concisely in the following philosophy as phrased by Allen[1] in the words of a child:

> What I can think about, I can talk about
> What I can say, I can write (or someone can write for me).
> What I can write, I can read.
>
> I can read what others write for me to read.

In this approach no distinction is made between the communication strands of speaking, listening, writing and reading. Equal emphasis is placed upon all these skills as each feeds into, facilitates and reinforces the others.

Reading and writing as well as speaking and listening may take place even during the first days of school. A few examples will be given: As a child paints, the teacher may ask, "What are you painting?" If the child answers, "My house," she may write the caption "My house" under his picture. If he has several objects in his picture she may ask what each one is and write the name that the child gives for each object above its picture.

As the children go about their creative work they talk. Tom, who is modeling with clay, may say, "See the dog I made!" The teacher may then suggest, "Let's write what you just said." She writes on the chalkboard or paper, "See the dog I made." Tom "reads" what she has written.

At the beginning the teacher writes what the children dictate. Eventually, and one by one, the children make a "commitment," that is, they say they want to write. The teacher then helps each child to write what he personally wishes to say or what others say in making a group chart or perhaps a booklet of group-composed charts.

In addition to art and construction activities, many other types of experiences are provided for the purpose of stimulating talk, for talk is the stuff out of which skills in listening, reading and writing emerge. The children go on excursions, view films, listen to recordings, sing songs, bring objects from home for discussion, relate their personal experiences, play games, listen to poems and stories and do numerous other things that provide opportunities to develop the language skills.

Materials

Prerequisites of the Language Experience Approach are materials and equipment that invite creative self-expression: paints and easels,[1] paper for finger painting, crayons and paper for drawing, clay for modeling, paper for free-hand cut-outs, scrap materials to fashion in ingenious ways.

[1] Dorris M. Lee and R. V. Allen, "Language Experiences in Reading Development," *Learning To Read Through Experience*. New York: Meredith Publishing Co., 1963. Pp. 33-35.

There are games to play. There are intriguing pictures to stimulate discussion, and there are many easy books with high interest appeal to first-grade children.

There may be a pet—a rabbit, a bird or a mouse that the children will observe, care for and talk about.

During early stages in the use of this method, no reading readiness workbooks or preprimers are used. Later, after the children have built up a sufficient reading vocabulary, they may use the books of any of the current reading series. Besides, trade books, other textbooks and periodicals are available in abundance. Supplemental reading materials and reading games of many kinds may also be used.

It is difficult to conceive of any pre-prepared material that might be used with children during the beginning days in which this method is used, for the content of their reading emerges from their own personal experiences. Allen and Allen,[1] however, have published materials under the title *Language Experiences in Reading*, which include extensive suggestions to the teacher for conducting a Language Experience program. For the children, record books are provided for two levels. Three pupil record books for Level I and two for Level II are organized into unit topics with which the authors believe all children will identify. There is much blank space where children are to write their own compositions in terms of their personal interests. The books are designed to serve as personal records of the childrens' writing, reading and thinking.

Research

The references under "Research" which follow describe several studies concerning the effects of the Language Experience Approach and include statistical data obtained by the investigators. These results are conflicting. Those wishing to pursue research reports on this method may wish to read some of these references.

[1] R. V. Allen, and Claryce Allen. *Language Experiences in Reading*. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Press, 1966.

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The Initial Teaching Alphabet

THE INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET is being used in many schools and is the subject of wide discussion.

This alphabet was devised in England by Sir James Pitman. The purposes which Pitman had in mind in preparing a revised alphabet in the English language were:

1. To provide a system of simplified spelling.
2. To improve the reading ability of children with the use of this system.

Pitman has warned that the alphabet is a medium, not a method. He also has stated emphatically that it is intended for use in initial stages of reading and not for continued use through the grades. He originally called the alphabet the "Augmented Roman Alphabet" but later renamed it the "Initial Teaching Alphabet." The initial letters of the words in this title are respectively *i.*, *t.* and *a.* Hence this medium of teaching is commonly known as "i.t.a."

æ b c d ɛɛ

f g h iɛ j k

l m n œ p r

r s t uɛ v w

y z ɤ wh ʧh

ʧh ʤh ʃh ʒ ŋ

ɑ au a e i o

u ɷ ɷ ʊu ʊi

The Pitman alphabet contains 44 symbols instead of the 26 symbols appearing in our conventional alphabet. The symbols consist of twenty-four of our lower-case Roman charcters, fourteen additional symbols combining our familiar characters, plus a few specialized symbols used for different sounds of the same letter. For example, if you look at the characters in the upper left-hand corner of the illustration on p. 9, you will note that the symbol for long *a* as in *face* is made up of a conventional *a* and *e* joined together. If you look at the second row from the bottom, reading from left to right, you will note that a script *a* is used for the sound of *a* as in *father*; a symbol made by joining the conventional *a* and *u* is used for the sound of *a* as in *ball;* and a conventional *a* and *u* is used for the sound of *a* as in *cap*. The use of different symbols to represent different sounds of the same letters causes the number of characters in the alphabet to run up to the total number of 44.

To many this alphabet that suddenly burst into our midst in the 1960's appears to have been a novelty. As a matter of fact, such alphabets have been with us for five centuries. As is true of some of the other so-called "new" approaches, revised and augmented Roman alphabets have gone through several cycles of development. Many different persons throughout the years have devised phonetic alphabets and used them in teaching children to read.

Interested individuals in England developed and used such alphabets in teaching reading in the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Between 1870 and 1920 several Americans developed expanded alphabets, prepared reading books and experimented in having reading taught with the use of books printed in their respective alphabets. In 1925 W. H. Winch published a monograph based on more than twenty years of work with his expanded alphabet called "Phonoscript."

During the years that followed 1925, interest in using augmented alphabets as mediums for teaching reading receded, and little was heard about them in the United States for many years. However, this interest was revived again in the sixties when reports came through concerning experimentation in Great Britain with the use of Pitman's "Initial Teaching Alphabet."

Thus it is that this idea for a different medium to use in teaching reading persisted through the years. The cycles in the development of i.t.a. are similar to those of several of the other so-called innovations.

Materials

Two basic sets of readers printed in i.t.a. have been published. One series developed in England prepared by John Downing and collaborators, and published in London in the early sixties, is titled *The Downing Readers*. This series, available to schools in the United States, embraces eight basic books, a review book, additional books for vocabulary extension, and the usual supplemental materials.

A series of i/t/a* readers has also been published in the United States; this series is widely used in our country. It is titled i/t/a *Early-to-Read* Program and was prepared by Albert J. Mazurkiewicz and Harold J. Tanyzer.

* The British in discussing the Pitman Alphabet follow the letters in the abbreviation by periods i.t.a. In discussing the American publications, the authors divide the letters with slashes as i/t/a.

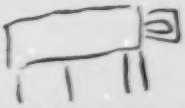
ben and ſhe gœt

ben lookt down ſhe rœd too
see if miss west wos cuming.
ben wos wæting too get a nue book.

Reproduced from Book 2, Early-To-Read i/t/a Program, Revised edition, by permission of Initial Teaching Alphabet Publications, Inc., New York.

The *Egrly-To-Read* i/t/a *Program* for Phase I contains five basic books, together with workbooks, teacher's manual, coordinated supplemental library sets, and a wealth of other supplemental reading materials as well as teaching materials and aids. For Phase II, additional materials are provided for "Extending and Developing Skills" and similarly for Phase III, "Spelling and Transition."

One first-grade series of readers widely used is printed in our tradtional orthography has been translated into i.t.a. The i.t.a. first-grade materials of *The New Basic Readers, Curriculum Foundation Series* (Scott, Foresman) are identical to their counterparts in the traditional orthography series except that the i.t.a. books are printed fully in the typography of the Initial Teaching Alphabet.



wun afturnœn ɛ went tœ mɛ
frens hous. hee wus sick.
hee had a cof and a sor thrœt
and a up set stumik and in bed.
wus

Composition by a pupil in the Bethlehem Area School District, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Method

As for a method to be used with i.t.a. Pitman, as stated above, did not recommend any particular method. The simplified alphabet, however, seems to invite writing. Most teachers who use i.t.a. urge their pupils to go ahead and write whether or not they know how to spell. Hence practically all reports concerning the use of i.t.a. emphasize highly favorable results in written composition which, of course, involves the language strands of composition, handwriting, and spelling. As one teacher puts it in her report: "Their creative writing is unbelievable. They're writing about their own experiences. With no limits on vocabulary, their writing is more mature and expressive." Above is a sample of a composition written by a first-grade child who was being taught with i.t.a.

The *Early to Read i/t/a Series* recommends a methodology to accompany the use of their books, which the authors call "The Language Arts Approach." Children participate from the beginning in activities involving reading, handwriting, creative writing, spelling and thinking. Sound symbols are introduced gradually and are reinforced in the workbooks.

Research

Research in regard to the effectiveness of the Pitman Alphabet in teaching reading is inconclusive. A large body of data in regard to the use of this alphabet has accumulated during the last few years, and most of the studies have shown i.t.a. to be superior. However, some of the investigations are now being questioned in regard to their designs and controls.

Some selected references to reports of research conducted concerning the effectiveness of i.t.a. are given in the list of "References" that follow. Perhaps the reader will wish to read some of these reports for himself.

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Linguistic Approaches to Reading

ALTHOUGH A BACKGROUND DISCUSSION of linguistic theory as applied to reading would probably be helpful at this point, to assume that an adequate discussion of linguistics and reading could be presented in the space available in this publication would be a ludicrous presumption. Linguistics is an old and a complex science. Perhaps all that can be accomplished in this introductory section is to point out that change has taken place in the science and use of linguistics and to provide definitions of some specialized terms that teachers of reading may meet. References at the end of this section are suggested to readers unfamiliar with linguistics; other references will be encountered continuously in educational journals.

Status and Specialized Vocabulary

At present linguistics seems to be viewed with respect but with lack of understanding on the part of many teachers. Linguists, however, are busy translating their theories into practical classroom methods and materials for English teachers, and this includes teachers of reading.

Linguistics has its own vocabulary. For the teacher not familiar with this science, here are definitions of a few terms most commonly found in articles about linguistics and reading.

To define such terms, perhaps we should first ask, "What is linguistics?"

Linguistics. Shane[1] defines linguistics by saying that it is:

1. A scholarly discipline concerned with the nature of human language—with what speakers do with and know about their language—as well as with different grammar systems, dialects and the like, AND . . .

[1] Harold G. Shane. *Linguistics and the Classroom Teacher.* Washington, D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1967. p. 3.

2. A *behavioral science* with implications for classroom strategy in trying to induce behavior change through the use of language, AND . . .
3. A *social science* as it establishes linkages between language and culture and language.

Linguist. A linguist was once considered to be a person who could speak many languages. In terms of modern linguistic theory a linguist is a scholarly person who specializes in language in all of its aspects.

Phonics and Phonemics. Fries[2] has defined *phonics* and *phonemics* in a way that distinguishes between the meanings of these two terms.

Phonics has been and continues to be a way of teaching beginning reading. It consists primarily in attempting to match the individual letters by which a word is spelled with the specific "sounds" which these letters "say." *Phonics* is used by some teachers as one of the methods of helping pupils, who have acquired a "sight-vocabulary" of approximately 200 words, to solve the problems presented by "new" words by "sounding" the letters.

Phonemics is a set of techniques by which to identify and to describe, especially in terms of distribution, the bundles of sound contrasts that constitute the structural units that mark the word-patterns. It is the phonemes of the language that alphabetic writing represents.

Phoneme. A phoneme is a unit of speech sound. Most linguists agree that there are 43 phonemes or speech sounds in the English language.

Grapheme. A grapheme is a letter or group of letters that represent a phoneme.

Phonemic-graphemic correspondence. This is a phrase frequently used by linguists when discussing reading. It means the agreement of a speech sound with the letter or cluster of letters that represent it in written or printed language.

Syntax. The way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses and sentences.

Morphology. Study of the forms of language; that is, a study of the meaningful units that we call words.

Reading Method and Materials

There is diversity of opinion among linguists in regard to reading method. Although linguists disagree, characteristic procedures "shine through" instructions to teachers that come with most published linguistic readers. Not *all* authors advocate *all* procedures mentioned below, but these procedures are fair representations of linguistic thinking:

- The alphabet is learned first of all, not because children are to learn the sounds of the letters but because these are the letter units that compose the sequence and order within the unit of a phoneme as the child sees it.

- The phoneme-grapheme relationships are presented in sequences of words of regular spelling as cat, rat, hat, etc. Minimum contrasts are sometimes presented as (mat—fat, mat—man, mat—met, etc.) Words of irregular spelling such as *the, on* are used sparingly and taught as sight words when needed in reading sentences.

[2] Charles C. Fries, *Linguistics and Reading*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1963. p. 156.

- Special activities to develop meanings usually are not used because the words in the reading book are supposed to be words already in the child's vocabulary; he therefore knows the meanings. Reading is simply a matter of turning printed symbols back into the child's oral language.
- In the teachers' guides of most series of linguistic readers, teachers are advised to have children do considerable writing in connection with the word patterns they read.
- Chalkboard work in syntax is often recommended, such as having children read sentences in which the order of words is changed, as: The dish is here. Is the dish here? Here is the dish.
- Some authors give attention to pitch and stress. Pitch has to do with intonation—the level and intensity of a given speech sound. Stress has to do with different degrees of accent on certain words.

Materials

The first reading book for children based on linguistics was "Let's Read," by Bloomfield and Barnhart,[3] containing 245 lessons. Children first learn the alphabet, then have practice in learning lists of words with similar patterns, followed in each case with sentences containing these words. The emphasis is on symbol-sound correspondences. All reading is done orally, and at this stage of development the authors believe that the emphasis should be on recognition of words, with little or no attention to meanings.

The first *series* of readers published to express linguistic theory was the *Merrill Linguistic Readers*, in which the basic program consists of six readers together with workbooks and supplemental materials.

The content of two sample pages in *My First Reader* of this series follows. The first page shows some sentences in which this word pattern is to be read in context.

cat
fat
Nat
a is

(p. 1)

A Fat Cat

Nat is a cat
Is Nat Fat?
Nat is fat.
Nat is a fat cat.

(p. 2)

Lists of word patterns appear on separate pages throughout but less frequently in the later books. In each case the list is followed with sentences in which pupils have an opportunity to read the pattern words in context. In *My Second Reader* the sentence selections begin to accumulate into plots which in successive readers expand in length and complexity. The stories are mostly realistic but there are a few fanciful tales and some poems.

Beginning reading instruction in this program starts with language activities plus learning the letters of the alphabet in capitalized, then lower-case forms. Children then proceed to learn certain word patterns, which in turn are placed in carefully organized sentence sequences.

[3] Leonard Bloomfield, and Clarence L. Barnhard. *Let's Read*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1961. p. 5.

Other basic linguistic series are described below briefly:

SRA Basic Reading Series (Science Research Associates, Inc., 1964, 1965). This series consists of six books arranged according to levels. Each level constitutes a sequence of sound-spelling patterns. Through an inductive discovery method, the child meets the sound-spelling patterns of related groups of words and is led to formulate his own generalizations.

The Linguistic Readers (Harper and Row, Inc., 1965). The series consists of pupil's readers, workbooks, and teachers' manuals. Vowel letters representing speech units are introduced in a patterned and consistent way. Considerable attention is given to separate consonants and to activities in which consonants are manipulated by substituting one of them with vowel-consonant combinations. Unpatterned speech units are carefully controlled. Preprimer and primer stories deal chiefly with fanciful stories about animals.

Miami Linguistic Readers (D. C. Heath & Company, 1964-65). Developed chiefly for bilingual children, this material has been strongly influenced by structural linguistics. At the same time, there is an attempt to maintain the practice of conventional reading programs in the use of content reflecting children's traditional literature. Grammatical forms and arrangements, as well as spelling patterns and vocabulary, are controlled. There are twenty-one pupils' books with accompanying seat work booklets and teachers' manuals.

Reading Experience and Development Series (American Book Company, 1968). This series is a linguistically oriented set of readers recently published. It is broader in design for teaching skills than previous linguistic readers. The series consists of pupils' texts, skill books, and tests (diagnostic, checkup and achievement) and is supplemented by separate kits designed to improve comprehension and word recognition. According to this method, children are introduced to groups of patterned words with regular spelling. Word recognition in this method may be said to be linguistic, but these patterns of words are used as a basis for *phonetic* generalizations. Linguistic influences, other than word patterns, are: emphasis on oral language, attention to appreciation of language (tone, stress, juncture); word order; punctuation; knowledge of various meanings of a word or of different uses of a word in two different cultures.

The Palo Alto Reading Program (Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968). This series contains twenty pupils' books, twenty workpads, six teachers' guides and an abundance of supplemental materials. It relies heavily upon linguistics with major emphasis upon sound-symbol relationships. Its method makes use of all strands of the language art.

Research

Several studies have been made to ascertain the effectiveness of the use of linguistic materials as compared with other methods. The results are inconclusive. Accounts of such studies are listed under "Research" in the References that follow.

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Programed Instruction with Reading Materials

PROGRAMED INSTRUCTION is a fairly new term to enter our educational vocabulary and has only recently been used to designate a method of teaching reading in the classroom. The term as applied to reading is often heard from educational platforms and is frequently encountered in books and periodicals. It would seem that programed instruction definitely has joined the group of new approaches to reading.

Evolution and Principles

Like many other "new" methods, the use of programed instruction has antecedents in ancient history. While the term came into use as an educational method in itself in recent times, many characteristics of this method throughout the ages have been apparent in attempts to improve instruction. The concept of minute analysis of teaching and learning tasks is evident in the detailed lessons used in Greece at the time of Cicero. The catechetical form used in religious instruction in the middle ages marshalled behaviors. The catechism in the New England Primer was "programed."

The term "programed instruction," however, is rather recent, the first use being attributed to B. F. Skinner, who used the term in his work with teaching machines to indicate a cover-all method exemplifying the principles on the next page. With the emergence of computers and other technological devises that have possibilities for using programed materials for instructional purposes, "programed instruction" has become a common term, particularly as associated with the technological devices for teaching.

Eventually, some programers began to ask, "Why can't we prepare programed materials that can be used in the classroom as textbooks?" Thus was born the concept of implementing programed instruction in reading with "software." Discussion here will be confined only to the teaching of reading with the use of "software" or, in other words, with textbook materials.

Although the vocabulary of programed instruction is not highly technical, it does contain a few words with specialized meaning:

Program When used as a verb, "to program" means to break subject matter or skills into small, sequentially organized units.

Programer. One who prepares programed material.

Frame. A unit of subject matter. Frames vary in sizes; usually a frame is a short sentence, a short paragraph or a passage of short paragraphs.

Some of the most important principles of programed instruction reflecting results of studies of learning conducted by psychologists are:

1. *Active response*. The pupil himself must make continuous responses involving explicit practice.
2. *Immediate confirmation*. Each response must be checked immediately by the student to see whether the response was right or wrong.
3. *Small steps*. The material to be learned must be broken down into small steps and carefully sequenced.
4. *Reinforcement*. Each step must be given repeated practice in order to establish the initial learning.
5. *Self-pacing*. Each pupil is supposed to proceed on an individual basis at his own rate.

Materials and Method

Programed materials for use as textbooks at the primary level are extremely limited. Only two will be described, with materials and their respective methods discussed under one heading:

Programed Reading. Prepared by Cynthia Dee Buchanan and Sullivan Associates, the first regular editions of this series appeared between 1963 and 1965. (1) Additional books have been added continuously.

Series 1. After two periods of preparatory work children start on a 128-page book titled *The Programed Primer. A Programed Prereader* is provided for those not ready to go ahead with the next regular text, *Book One*. After finishing *Book One*, the child goes on to read story books in Series 1.

Series 2 consists of seven programed workbooks and two story books. Test booklets are also provided.

Series 3 embraces several books, including a wide variety of material such as poems, plays, short stories, and selections about gods and heroes of Greek mythology. This series also includes the first programed novel, *The Roundabout's Secret*.

Examination of the illustration will show that four different responses are called for. In two frames the child is supposed to complete a word by adding a missing letter. In one frame he responds by choosing one of two phrases. In another frame he makes a "yes" or "no" response. (The ant in the picture is red.) In the last frame he marks a picture to represent a phrase. (In one of the pictures the mat is brown.)

The answers are given in the panel on the left side of the page. The child is provided with a "slider" with which he covers the answers. When he has written his response he reveals the answer by pulling the slider down to the black line at the bottom of the section containing the answer. Thus he finds out immediately whether he was right or wrong.

To elaborate more fully on the method: Children, before working with the primer, are guided through two preparatory stages. In the first stage they learn to recognize and write the alphabet. Alphabet cards and an alphabet strip are provided for the teacher's use.

In the second stage, in which the work is entirely oral, children learn the sounds of A, M, N, T and I. After a child finishes the primer period when he is under the teacher's direction, he is given a test. If he makes a score of 80 or more he proceeds to work with Book I. If his score is below 80 he works with the teacher on *Programed Prereader*. Although most children work independently after starting Book I, those who do not continue to work with the teacher for a time. As soon as independence is achieved each child proceeds at his own rate.

The method is linguistically oriented in that words are arranged in patterns of words of similar spelling. However, children are also taught the sounds of separate letters, in other words, phonics.

Spelling and handwriting are used from the beginning. The child is often required to supply a missing letter in a word and sometimes a whole word. The authors say that the vocabulary of the second series is large enough so that children can help to write short stories, descriptive passages and poems.

Michigan Successive Discrimination Reading Program. Here, the reading program by Donald E. P. Smith and collaborators[1] is part of a general language arts program including discrimination in writing, listening and language as well as in reading.

The purpose of this program, according to the authors, is to teach reading, writing and listening to all English-speaking children or adults.

There are four books teaching visual and auditory components: Books 1 and 2 for teaching the visual component, and Books I and II for the auditory component. Books 3 to 8 complete the basal program covering a vocabulary of 349 words and providing a complete course in phonemic analysis. Books 9, 10 and 11 are designed to prepare the child for independent analytic reading. Teachers' manuals are provided. Simple line drawings are used; all volumes are bound in soft covers.

The content which appears on the upper half of page 8-203 in Book 8 is presented below. In working with this page the child is given practice in finding the sentence "He took those pennies." Preceding this page he had practice in finding this same sentence within another group of sentences, and in finding the word *those* in lists of words. Following this page he completes sentences by writing *those* in appropriate places.

He took those pennies

1. He took those peonies. He took those pennies. He takes those panties.
2. He tickle pinches. He took those pennies. He took the open panes.
3. He took all those pennies. He took those pennies.

[1] Donald E. P. Smith, *Michigan Successive Discrimination Program*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press.

Research

Research is scant, indeed, in regard to the effectiveness of programed instruction materials used without automation in the classroom teaching of primary children. Only one scientifically controlled investigation has been reported in educational literature at the time of this writing. This study was conducted by Ruddell(11) who used the Sullivan *Programed Reading Series* in six classrooms and the Sheldon basic readers in six classrooms. In two other groups of classrooms he used supplementary linguistic material. The results obtained from comparing the programed instruction groups with the basal reader groups can be summed up by stating that the difference was not significant. Both groups did about as well as you would expect children to do at the end of the school year.

A few studies have been reported as having been conducted not with groups of classroom children but with individual pupils or with older-age remedial groups using programed material. A sampling of these studies will be mentioned.

Ellson(8) reports a high degree of success in an experiment in which 120 first-graders in inner-city schools were tutored individually with a programed instruction method and their reading ability compared with that of matched controls. The reading achievement of the tutored group was significantly higher than the control group. Ellson has also used this method successfully in tutoring remedial reading cases and mentally retarded children. In all instances the method was used as a supplement to regular classroom teaching.

One attempt at using programed instruction with remedial cases was reported by Godkin(9), who with others conducted in New York City schools a two-year project in which they used programed material devised to upgrade the reading skills of seventh- and eighth-grade students. Their work with programed instruction failed to modify the critical behavior of the students in reading, which was their goal.

The above samples are representative of the limited research which is available on providing programed reading instruction without automation. There is urgent need for more carefully controlled studies of this type with primary children.

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Words in Color

IN YEARS PAST TEACHERS often have used colored chalk to direct attention to a letter or group of letters within a word. Spache states that the idea of using color to identify the common sounds was introduced by Nellie Dale in 1899.

Caleb Gattegno, author of the method described below, developed and used this approach first in teaching reading in Amharic, the official language in Ethiopia; then in teaching reading to Spanish-speaking adults in Argentina, and finally in teaching reading in Hindi to illiterates in India.

Development and Principles

The method at present is being used most prevalently in this country with children at the beginning reading stage. The author, however, recommends it for use with older children who are having difficulty with reading and as a method helpful in teaching adult illiterates.

Dr. Gattegno's principles are as follows:

1. Start with what we have (speech) and first find the means of translating it through a code into sets of signs.
2. Be governed by the *integrative schema* that makes sense of the activity for the learner himself and develops like all biological activities—for mastery and immediate use and then through independence to automation (becoming "second nature.")
3. Place full responsibility on the learner.
4. Let the child learn by the discovery method.

Materials

The materials provided for use with this approach consist of several items. For the teacher there is *Background and Principles, Words in Color;* and *Teachers' Guide, Words in Color.* For use in class work there are: 21 Wall Charts (in color), 8 Phonic Code Charts (in color), Set of Word Cards (over 1200 words printed in black on colored cards. For each pupil there are the following materials printed in black only: *Word Building Book,* Book I, Book 2, Book 3, Book of Stories, Set of Work Sheets 1-14.

This is a strong phonic approach which uses a color device to teach recognition of the letter sounds in the English language. For example: *a* has ten sounds; each one of these *a* shapes has a different color.

Two examples of the content of the 21 Wall Charts are given below. The first chart contains vowel sounds only as:

a a aa aaa u u uu uuu au ua uau aua i i ii iii aiu uia uiu iau ee e ee eee aei eua eaiu o o oo ooo aaeeoo ieoii oaa aoie oou

All of the remaining charts contain words made up of a combination of vowels and consonants.

The Phonic Code charts contain columns of different spellings of vowels or consonants which have the same sound, each sound being represented in its own color. In the examples below words are placed above the columns to indicate the color which is used to represent each sound.

Here are two examples of the twenty columns of vowels:

YELLOW	TAN
u (up)	o (no)
o (done)	oe (toe)
oe (does)	ow (know)
ou (young)	oa (road)
oo (blood)	ew (sew)
	ou (soul)
	eau (beau)
	ough (though)

Below are two samples of the twenty-seven columns of consonants:

LAVENDER	GRAY
n (no, fun)	fu (fun)
ne (phone)	ph (phone)
kn (know)	lf (half)
pn (pneumonia)	gh (laugh)
gn (gnat)	

Method

Hinds (5) suggests five major procedures to teachers for using *Words in Color:*

"1. They give students the responsibility for evaluating their own and peer performances without relying on teacher criticism.

2. They work with the erring student through inductive questioning; they lead him to see relationships rather than call on another student for a correct response. Emphasis is on discovery principles which stress processes leading to response and on many correct answers rather than one correct answer.

3. They use an activity approach which stimulates manipulation and internalization of conscious processes of controlling the formation of new words through addition, substitution, insertion, and reversals.

4. They place emphasis on dialects and many different ways of pronouncing words rather than on rigid uncompromising standards.

5. They concentrate on the code of the language and its relationship to sounds the speakers make. Observation further showed that inexperienced experimental teachers could utilize the power of the *Words in Color* methods and materials to develop an awareness of processes for problem solving."

While the purpose and principles of the method in the teacher's role as stated by its advocates indicate emphasis on pupil discovery, motivation and self-activity, these highly desirable characteristics are not evident in beginning procedures for teaching with this method. Possibly they may be realized when pupils have reached the stage of automation.

The proponents of the method claim that it offers a total language arts program. They say that writing, spelling, beginning study of grammatical structure and composition enter into the use of this method to a greater extent than is usually true of other primary methods. They also claim that with insight a teacher using this method can acquaint her pupils with an over-all organization and understanding of the English language.

Research and Evaluations

Information concerning the effectivenes of *Words in Color* in teaching reading to children consists of reports of teachers using the method or who have observed it in use. There are some studies reporting the use of the method with adult illiterates, but at the time of writing this manuscript the writer is unaware of any published research in regard to a scientifically controlled investigation as to the effectiveness of teaching children by this method. References to literature in which evaluations are made through experience and observation are listed below.

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Special Reading Series For Disadvantaged Urban Children

MULTIRACIAL READING SERIES for the disadvantaged in cities is a welcome innovation. For too many years primary readers have presented as the prototype a Caucasian brother and sister living in suburbia, in a ranch-style house with geranium-blooming window boxes. Father who wears a white collar comes home from work driving a late-model car. These depictions are totally foreign to thousands of disadvantaged children living in cities.

With emphasis on integration, with governmental, social and educational concerns for the disadvantaged, and with urgent clamor to meet the problems of big cities, the inevitable breakthrough in reading programs reflecting these concerns has come. Many teachers greet it with gratitude and appreciation.

Observation, study and research have revealed the characteristics of disadvantaged children. Their background of experience is seriously limited: few have toys, pictures, books and magazines. Many have never been as much as twenty blocks from home, have never seen a movie, have never eaten in a restaurant. They lack verbal skills, their vocabulary is limited, their speech is inferior. They do not possess acceptable social skills and are confused and sometimes looked upon with disfavor by other children who do possess such skills. Many have physical defects and emotional problems. They have low concepts of themselves and enter first grade anticipating that they will not be able to do the things that they will be asked to do.

Repeated investigations have shown that reading development is tied up with other facets of child growth—physical, mental, emotional, social, verbal and experiential. It appears, therefore, that the most effective way to help the disadvantaged child to be successful in reading is to get him as soon as possible into a rich, active, experiential and verbal environment.

Head Start, Follow Through and modern kindergarten programs are aimed at meeting these needs. Some first grade teachers also are highly cognizant of these needs and are continuing many of the preschool activities in their first grades. Other teachers are placing too much emphasis on a formalized method of teaching reading as the sole solution to the reading problems of the disadvantaged. The needs of the disadvantaged are much broader and deeper

than learning to read in itself. Reading success will ensue most wholesomely and productively when the whole child is developed and not before.

Many successful informal reading programs for the disadvantaged make no use of published materials. For accounts of such programs see the references that follow: Black, Millard H. (1), and Stanchfield, Jo M. (7).

Some authors, however, have developed commendable series of readers specially designed for the disadvantaged in cities. Materials and methods involved in some of these series will be mentioned below. Three recent series prepared for use with the multi-racial urban disadvantaged will be discussed.

Materials and Methods

City Schools Reading Program. This series of readers, developed in Detroit by a committee with Gertrude Whipple as chairman, has as its major objective the preparation of material that would enable disadvantaged city children to identify themselves with the content and pictures. More familar content, it was thought, would help them to learn to read more easily and rapidly.

Materials at this writing consist of five preprimers, two primers, a first reader, a second reader, and a third reader is now published. Teachers' manuals, activities books and other teaching aids are provided.

A language study of disadvantaged children preceding the writing of the books revealed that such children used a smaller proportion of compound and complex sentences than did representative children, used a larger proportion of incomplete sentences, committed more grammatical errors and failed to use about one-fourth the words appearing in current first-grade basic readers. With this information at hand, the authors attempted to use models of English expression in their readers that would help to overcome these inadequacies.

Selections, carefully controlled in vocabulary and sentence patterns, include interesting incidents related to the lives of children which could happen in the home or back yard of a child regardless of race or socioeconomic background. Every incident has a climax usually involving a surprise or humorous ending. Preprimer books are bound in soft covers; the later books have hard covers. The illustrations show children of different races playing together. In the first three preprimers, pictures of a Negro family and of a boy representing a Caucasian family are introduced. In the successive readers, people of various races and nationalities are represented.

Results of research conducted in Detroit in regard to the effectiveness of this reading program indicate high-interest value of the books to children and reveal gains in word recognition, oral reading, and verbal competence. The study included not only a comparison of test scores but also preferences of *City School Series* with a standard series. One of several conclusions resulting from this preference study was the very wholesome one to the effect that when asked which readers they preferred, all groups favored the readers of City Schools Reading Program and all groups preferred Negro characters, chiefly because these characters appeared in exciting stories.

The Bank Street Readers. These readers were prepared by professional writers of children's books, who worked in close collaboration with reading specialists and teachers in the Bank Street College, and with the advice of sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists teaching there. The authors state that this program was prepared to provide readers that might reflect the multicultural, multiracial, multiarchitectural needs of a big city.

The material (all copyrighted 1965) for the first grade consists of two preprimers, a primer, and a first reader, with two readers each for the second and third grades. There is a teacher's guide for the readiness period and preprimers and a teacher's edition for each of the readers. A workbook is provided for the two preprimers and one for each of the other readers.

As the content is designed to present an authentic cross-section of life in urban America, the settings of most selections are in an urban environment. The characters involve Mexicans, Orientals, Negroes, and Puerto Ricans, as well as Caucasians, all of whom reside in large cities. In short, the selections reflect the homogeneity of city people and carry with them broad social, cultural and racial implications. The stories are of excellent literary quality, and while most of them are realistic, some poems, fairy tales, folk tales, and selections from classical literature are included.

The art work is distinctive and colorful. The double-page spreads and many full-page pictures strongly reinforce the content of the books and the intent of the authors to depict typical city scenes involving characters of different races.

In method the authors place strong emphasis upon phonics and structural analysis with some, but a lesser, consideration for context clues. They make use of meaningful words in the children's spoken vocabularies and, if these words do not lend themselves to usual word recognition techniques, the teacher is advised to tell the children what they are. Experience charts are used more freely in this program than is usually the case. First emphasis is placed on meanings throughout the series.

The Chandler Language Experience Readers. Two readiness workbooks, several booklets to read, a series of large pictures and teachers' guide books comprise this series. The program simulates the Language Experience Approach described on pages 5-8, except that children read selections in their books representing charts that other children have composed about their common experiences, rather than having their own language transcribed as it evolves.

The series, however, was definitely prepared to meet the needs of disadvantaged urban children. The authors believe that the language of some other first grade readers is "artificial and contrived" and that disadvantaged children should read stories that have developed out of the joint experiences of children and teacher and which express the natural language of children. Hence the pages in these readers contain experience-chart stories that have actually been composed by children in different situations.

The typography of the books looks as if it might be manuscript but it is really large and bold typeface. Illustrations are actual photographs of children of different races in a city environment engaging in activities common to a disadvantaged child. They are used to stimulate discussion, broaden concepts, increase vocabulary and develop awareness of words and their functions.

The method includes the composition and reading of charts composed by the children themselves as a supplement to reading stories in their books representing chart stories of other children. In addition to concept development and word recognition, considerable attention is given to auditory and visual discrimination.

Miami Linguistic Readers. These readers were prepared especially for bilingual children in a disadvantaged area. The materials were described under "Linguistic Reading Series" on pages 15-20.

Research and Evaluation

Most of the many informal accounts of programs used in teaching reading to the disadvantaged in educational literature indicate that results were successful when special adjustments were made in the instruction provided for children of this type. The effectiveness of these methods as indicated by pre-tests and post-tests has shown good growth in reading. See references no. 1 and no. 7.

As for the published materials, only two controlled studies of reading approaches for disadvantaged urban children have been reported so far in educational literature. One is concerned with basal readers.

The other comparative study was conducted by Harris and Serwer (11), who compared four teaching methods as used by disadvantaged Negro children: basal reader, phonovisual, language experience, language-experience audiovisual. First-grade children in twelve schools were involved in the first year of study, and these same children were tested in the second grade in eleven schools. Among the investigators' (10) conclusions at the end of second grade were these:

"While there was a consistent difference in favor of the skills-centered approach over the language experience approach, neither the differences between the two approaches nor any of the differences among pairs of methods were statistically significant, as measured by the Metropolitan Upper Primary battery.

"The wide variations in achievement means within each method, which far exceeded the differences between methods, seem to show that in this study the teacher was a far more important influence than the particular one of the four methods used."

Thus we find that the results of this study, like those of several other studies, point to two conclusions:

1. Disadvantaged children do learn to read with any of several different methods.

2. The teacher is the most important factor in teaching reading to disadvantaged children.

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Technological Approaches to Reading

The Talking Typewriter

TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING beginning reading is now with us. The talking typewriter was the first of automated devices to be used for this purpose. In 1962 Omar Khayyam Moore startled laymen and educators alike when he showed a motion picture in which three- and four-year old children were using a talking typewriter in teaching themselves to read. Discussion that arose then, pro and con, is still going on.

For several years the use of the talking typewriter proceeded no further than experimentation with a small number of children in the laboratory, but now the device is under experimentation in the public schools of several cities.

Equipment

The talking typewriter now under experimentation is produced by The Responsive Environment Corporation, Hamden, Connecticut, and is an improved version of the one used by Moore in his early experimentation.

It looks like an ordinary typewriter with a large keyboard, above which is a screen for visual presentation and a microphone. A recorder inside the machine is computer-controlled. Both audio and visual responses are made through the use of slides and tapes. This expensive automated device sells for $40,000, but can be leased by a school system at $1,000 a month. The software used in the typewriter is programed. It is said that over 600 programs are available. Teachers may also write their own programs.

Method

In using this device children work in booths at typewriter keyboards. The keyboard may be set for free exploration in case a child is to work at home with the family machine. For directed teaching, the machine is programed with coordinated visual and audio instructions to reinforce specific learning behavior. For example: when the letter A appears on display and is sounded by the speaker, the child can depress the A key only. None of the other keys will work for him. If the speaker asks the child to spell *cat* he can depress only the correct letters in the correct order. None of the other letters on the keyboard will respond to his touch.

After the child learns to recognize all the letters, the sounds of the letters are taught. Eventually he types dictated sentences and small compositions. After a time he types compositions of his own about pictures shown on the typewriter's

screen. Still later he makes up and types his own compositions unaided by pictures.

With the exception of handwriting, which is replaced with typing, several of the important strands of English are given practice in this approach: listening, reading, spelling and composition.

Experimentation*

The use of the talking typewriter in three different centers will be discussed briefly. In each of these, young children are taught to read with this mechanism.

In Philadelphia experimentation is under way in teaching forty preschool children. The study is being conducted at the Drexel Institute of Technology. One group of three-year-olds work with the typewriter fifteen minutes a day, the other group work twenty minutes a day. For the rest of the school day all the children attend nursery school where they are exposed to a rich environment and where they engage in a variety of activities. The experimenters in this situation use both an automated talking typewriter and a nonautomated device consisting of a primer typewriter, a recorder and slides. They have attempted to compare the effectiveness of the two devices.

In Chicago experimentation with talking typewriters has been conducted under the direction of Project Breakthrough in Cook County Department of Public Aid. The children, ranging in age from three and a half to five years, come from homes in which the parents received public assistance.

Different children began work at different times between September 1966 and the midde of August in 1967. Each child worked for a total of about thirteen hours distributed over a period of more than seven months. The rest of their school time was spent in nursery school where they also had some lessons based upon the programed instructional materials that were used in connection with the talking typewriter.

In New York an extensive government-financed experiment is under way. Four-, five-, and six-year old children work with twenty talking typewriters, each child in a booth by himself isolated from distracting sounds. A human monitor, sitting or standing outside the booth observes the child through a glass window in the front side of the booth and gives assistance when needed.

In this experiment, at the beginning the keys on the typewriter appear in different colors. The child's fingernails are painted to correspond with letters which are to be taught. He matches the color of a fingernail with the color of a letter which he is asked to depress. After working with the typewriters the children go to a classroom in which their learning is reinforced by a human teacher.

Experimental Results and Evaluation

Results. Philadelphia reports that several children in the project learned to read at first- and second-grade level. They also state that seven children, unsuccessful with the nonautomated device, were able to succeed when using the automated talking typewriter.

Chicago experimenters state that after twelve hours and fifty-three minutes the children recognized all upper-case and lower-case letters and many of them were able to recognize sight words.

*Much of this information about experimentation is based on an article in *The Reading Newsreport*. See Reference No. 5.

New York's director, Dr. Benjamin Israel, reports that the project shows promise. As for progress in specific skills, the New York children, after learning to recognize the letters and their sounds, can type whole stories dictated to them.

Evaluation. There is no doubt that a talking-typewriter would offer motivation to a young child. He would enjoy playing with the gadget. There is no doubt that the conditioning afforded by repeatedly trying the keys until he finds one that will respond to his touch will result in learning. The ingredients of the learning act are there—motivation, self-activity, satisfaction in correct response. One would expect that under these conditions a young child *could* learn the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, *could* learn to spell and type out stories under dictation.

We are told, however, in connection with the Chicago and New York studies that reinforcement of what the children were learning on the typewriter was given outside of typewriter practice by a human teacher. From the standpoint of acceptable research techniques one might ask what proportion of the successful results were due to efforts of the human teacher and what proportion were due to practice on the typewriter.

In further discussion it might be said that there is a dichotomy of opinion at the present time in regard to the formal teaching of skills and subject matter to very young children.

On the one hand there are educators and laymen pressuring for more intensive and extensive teaching of skills and subject matter to the very young. No doubt some members are this group would consider the talking typewriter a medium of great promise, especially because it is used successfully in teaching three- and four-year-olds to read.

On the other hand there are childhood education specialists who deplore attempts to teach formal skills and subject matter to young children with any medium of instruction. They point to the wealth of studies which show that reading development accompanies development of the other facets of child growth—physical, mental, emotional, social, verbal and experiential. They question whether learning that comes from an adult seeking to hasten growth of a child scholastically beyond the normal growth of other facets of child development will be wholesome and worthwhile in the long run. Their thinking may be summed up in some such way as this: "Of course you *can* teach young children to read, but *should* you?"

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The Computer

WITH ALL THE EXCITEMENT over the computer in industry, transportation, communication and in technological and professional files, it is to be expected that education would be scrutinized to ascertain possible improvement through computerization. Reading, the most important skill in education, has already undergone experimental teaching with a computer and, surprisingly, at the beginning stage. Undoubtedly the computer will march relentlessly on in our instructional lives and will eventually take its place in *public schools*. We may as well begin thinking about this possibility. The discussion that follows gives a brief explanation of how first-grade children are being taught to read by an all-automated computer in a project conducted by Stanford University at Brentwood School, East Palo Alto, California.

Equipment and Material*

The computer equipment for teaching reading is as complicated as it sounds. There is, of course, a central process computer, accompanied by tape-storage units, disc-storage units, card reader/punch, line printer, two proctor stations and sixteen terminals.

The children's equipment consists of a picture-projector, cathode ray tube, a light-projection pen, an audio system that transmits recorded messages, and a modified typewriter keyboard.

The reading material embraces about 200 lessons, programed and linguistically based at six levels with about thirty-five lessons in each level. Adequate branching of extra materials is provided to meet remedial needs of the average pupil. In case of pupil frustration or special need a monitor is called.

A typical lesson deals with: letter discrimination and identification; initial vocabulary acquisition; word-decoding tasks, syntactic and intonation practice with phrase and sentence material; and information processing tasks.

How It Works

The sixteen terminals from the one computer serve sixteen children. Each child works at the end of his particular terminal. While all children work simultaneously, each one may be working on different material and progressing at his own rate.

The child has an opportunity to make three different kinds of responses: he may make a response on the picture screen with a light-projection pen, on the typewriter, or he may make an oral response.

The recorder gives the child oral instructions and tells him whether or not his responses are correct. In case the child does not respond the computer taps out a signal calling the monitor or teacher who gives any personal assistance that is needed.

* Much of the information in this article was obtained from *Reading Research Quarterly*, II No. 1 (Fall 1966). See Reference 1.

Research and Evaluation

Reports of the rapid progress of pupils have been reported by those involved with the Brentwood study. One study has reported the effectiveness of this method of teaching reading as compared with a basal reader program, in which the computer group showed superior results. The question repeatedly asked about the controls in this study is, "Were the superior results due to the motivation offered by the computer or to the material used in the computer?"

As is true of many other of the new approaches, much more, *much, much* more research needs to be conducted. We need *many* studies of each of the new approaches, studies which are carefully designed, carefully controlled and carefully analyzed in terms of many facets of child development and many facets of reading growth.

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PART II

Children's Language and Their Reading

By RUTH STRICKLAND

A MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY that society assigns to every primary grade teacher is that of teaching children to read. Note that this is *teaching children to read*, not teaching reading to children; the emphasis is on the children and their reading, not on the teaching process. All too often much of the emphasis in the school and the root of considerable controversy lies in our concern for what teachers are teaching and how they are teaching it rather than for what children are learning and how they are learning it. Too often, we see ourselves as the doers and forget that it is what the child does in the process of learning to read that makes all the difference. The ultimate goal is not teaching children *how* to read but making readers of children. A reader is a person who reads, not a person who can read. The way a child feels about reading as he learns to read is of the utmost importance.

Learning to read is learning to react to language in the form of visual symbols. Language is the material with which the teacher works. Her own language directs and conditions the child's thinking and his attitudes toward everything that pertains to reading. The language she uses colors his attitude toward himself as a learner and toward the tasks she imposes in teaching him to read. The language of the material the child reads strikes a responsive chord in him, leaves him unmoved, or causes him to reject it. The entire reading process at any level of maturity as well as the beginner's process of learning how to read is process involving language. Since this is true, the teacher needs to be a student of language from four points of view: (1) She needs to understand language as a human phenomenon and its power in the life of individuals. (2) She needs to know as much as possible about how children learn language before they come to school, the methods they use and the competencies they develop. (3) She needs to give careful attention to the language of each child she is responsible for teaching in order to learn what his language is like and what he can do with it. (4) She needs to comprehend the many ways in which her own language and the language of the reading materials she uses influence the teaching-learning process.

The Child's Learning of Language

Children put tremendous energy and concentration into the learning of language. Scholars who have studied children's acquisition of language still do not know *how* they do it, but there is increasingly clear evidence of *what* they do. Even so, no theory of learning yet proposed seems to explain the amazing mastery of language children achieve in the years from two to five. Part of the learning is imitation, of course. Even before the child's first birthday he becomes aware of the rhythm and flow of language so that his babbling begins to sound familiar to his English-speaking parents. Listening to a child of this age, one becomes aware of the fact that some of his strings of babbled sound have the pattern of statements, questions or exclamations. The child who is talked to and who hears the talk of adults and siblings uses the rise and fall of pitch and the patterns of emphasis and pauses—in short, the melody of the language even before he has a vocabulary of words. When he becomes aware of the fact that things have names he may be insistent and demanding with his recurrent, "Whaz zat?" As he comes to realize that language has power to cause things to happen he does an immense amount of practicing, talking to his toys, talking to himself before he falls asleep, using talk to accompany action as he plays. Vygotsky, a Russian scholar, maintains that this talking to himself is a part of learning to think—that it is talk on the way inward (12).

Summarizing his analysis of what is known about children's acquisition of language, Lenneberg of Harvard has concluded that children follow a definite timetable in their learning of language, beginning at a certain point in their over-all development (7). They follow the timetable idiosyncratically, of course, some beginning earlier and learning faster, some later and more slowly. But every child, unless he is seriously handicapped either mentally, physically, or by unfavorable environment, follows the same sequence.

It becomes evident sometime during his second or third year that the child is not learning language items individually but that he is intuitively sensing the way the language operates, that he is becoming aware of rules of procedure. His remark, "My book is more better than his," indicates that he is noting methods of dealing with comparatives and superlatives. His use of "feets," "deers," and "mouses" patterned after the plural endings of "books," "boys," and "wishes" indicates his awareness of a scheme of operation for plurals. His verb forms, "runned," "goed," "brang," and "buyed" indicate his awareness of what one does as he forms the past tense, "walked," "played," "wanted," and "sang." The child's so-called errors are actually consistent applications of his intuitively sensed rule in a language of many inconsistencies.

Studies of children's vocabulary indicate that the average child has a speaking vocabulary of at least 2,500 words when he comes to first grade and an understanding vocabulary that may be ten times as great. There are no accurate measures of the vocabulary of children in these days of television, travel in parents' cars and the easy availability of books for children. Many parents are aware of the fact that children today use at an early age words that were late acquisitions in the lives of the parents.

The originality children demonstrate in their creation of new words is proof that not all of their learning is imitation. Such remarks as, "I guess I misunderheard you" and "I am a why-er and you are a because-er" prove that

children use language creatively to meet their needs just as their early ancestors must have done. Any teacher can add many examples.

There is information, too, on children's use of sentence structure. Menyuk, of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, found children of three years using the basic sentence patterns of English, though with a minimum of vocabulary. Studies by Loban of the University of California at Berkeley and by Francis working with this author at Indiana University found children of six years using all of the kinds of sentences employed by adults and doing so with great flexibility.

All of this evidence gives substance to an assertion by Kornei Chukovsky after forty years of studying the language of Russian children from two to five, "In truth, the young child is the hardest mental toiler on our planet." He considers the child of this age to be for this short period of time a linguistic genius. But, he concludes, there is no trace left by the age of eight of the creativity that characterized the young child. He attributes this to the fact that the child by that time has fully mastered the basic principles of his native language. Many teachers might wonder whether this dulling of interest can be in any way attributed to what the school does about language.

The Language Basis of Reading

Every child comes to school with a language and, since reading is a language skill, any program for the teaching of reading should give careful attention to the child's language and should utilize the competencies he has already developed. His language tells the teacher three things about the child: the quality of his language mirrors the language of his home and the educational and cultural background of his parents; the child's vocabulary indicates the meagerness or richness of his real and vicarious experience; the ease with which he expresses himself indicates the wholesomeness of his attitude toward himself—self-respecting, confident and outgoing or withdrawn, timid, repressed, fearful or belligerent, defensive and rejecting. The child's competencies and his attitudes are the outgrowth of the ease or difficulty he encountered in learning to communicate through language and the adequacy of his communication in meeting his life needs both in and out of school.

The language a child learns must of necessity be the language of his home and neighborhood. No matter how bright or how dull he is he can learn only what is there for him to learn. Some children are fortunate enough to learn at home the language spoken at school and the language which is used in their textbooks. Other children may learn equally skillfully a Spanish-American dialect, a Pennsylvania Dutch, one of the many varieties of Negro or Indian dialect, the dialect of an Appalachian group or just the "Me and him ain't got none" dialect of an unschooled neighborhood. At no point in American life do dialect differences stand out as clearly as they do in the beginning grades. Whatever the language is, it and the experience and competence the child has acquired as he learned it are the material the teacher must work with in teaching the child to read. Regardless of the homogeneity or diversity within a school neighborhood, each child differs from every other child in the background he brings to school, his competence in the use of his language, and the skills he has developed in his learning of it.

Because of the importance of language to success in learning to read, the first imperative in any primary classroom is the stimulation of free talk so that the

teacher many know the material with which she must work. Because they consider the oral language so important, educational leaders in England have coined a term, "oracy," which they compare in value to literacy. All teachers need to beware of allowing the obligation to teach reading to cut off free and extensive use of oral language. What the child has achieved with oral language has developed in him certain competencies that are important in learning to read. Every child who has learned to talk has learned to give attention to patterns and arrangements of sound and to schemes of operation in stringing words together to carry meaning. He has learned the basic phonology of his language and also its basic syntax and he applies his knowledge in his own way. He is deeply interested in language and recognizes its worth in his daily living. All of this is of value in learning to read.

Living with people who talk, the child has learned to talk and has done it without lessons, drill, or programed material. Now, learning to read cannot exactly parallel learning to talk because reading is not the same as talking nor is the language of writing identical with the language of speech. Talking is a skill the child appears inherently to desire while reading is a skill required by the culture. If the child had lived a few centuries ago, or even today in some parts of the world, he might not need to learn to read. But the children a first grade teacher must teach to read are the same children who have learned a language before coming to school and have done it with truly amazing skill.

Children Who Read Early

Every kindergarten and first grade teacher encounters an occasional child who has learned to read or made a good beginning with reading before coming to school. It is possible that the number of such children is increasing due to the influence of television, the availability of books for children in supermarkets, bus stations, low-price stores and local libraries, and the wealth of real and vicarious experiences enjoyed by some children. Durkin has located some of these children and explored the influences that seem to have brought about the early reading. (4)

Durkin and her assistants administered a test of 37 words individually and orally to 5,103 first grade children in the Oakland, California, schools. The test brought to light 49 children, 20 boys and 29 girls, one percent of the population, who passed the word test. All of these children later scored on certain of the Gates Primary Reading Tests, seven of them also taking the Advanced Primary Tests because of perfect scores on the first tests. Later, the same procedures used in New York brought to light 180 out of 4,465 children, four percent of the group, who successfully identified a minimum of 18 words. Of these children 157 were able to score on the Gates Primary Tests. Durkin's evidence from the tests and from interviews with parents regarding the motivation and help the children had received caused her to arrive at some generalizations in answers to her question, "How do children learn to read at home?"

The first and most important of these findings was that the approach used by children was what educators tend to call a language arts approach. Because the first evidence of interest shown by these children was interest in learning to print and to spell, she dubbed the children "pencil and paper kids." Their "learning sequence moved from (a) scribbling and drawing, to (b) copying objects and letters of the alphabet, to (c) questions about spelling, to (d) ability

to read." Because of their interest in printing the children asked many questions about spelling, beginning with interest in spelling and writing their own names. Sometimes this interest caused a parent or an older sibling to give attention to sounds of letters, a procedure that was productive with some children but not with others. Some of the children had indulged in what might be called "interest binges," following an interest for long periods of time before abruptly discarding it. This, Durkin reminds, is in striking contrast to school programs that assume a short attention span.

A frequent source of interest in words was enjoyment of stories read and reread by parent or sibling. Children would ask "Where does it say that?" or "What's that word?" Some children insisted on turning the pages as they listened to a familiar story. The initiative and persistence children showed in doing and learning what they wanted to do and learn is again a sharp contrast to the teacher-dominated activities found in many first grade reading programs. A number of the children had been inspired to learn to read by the interest of an older sibling, more often a sister than a brother, and by playing school with older children.

All of Durkin's findings need to be considered very thoughtfully by teachers of beginning reading. What these early readers did as they learned to read was very different from what takes place in many primary classrooms. The children took the initiative, they were the doers, utilizing the help of others when and as they were ready for it and wanted it. They determined the time, the duration, the sequence of their learning. They chose the material, the content for their learning, whether television advertising, supermarket labels, roadside signs, the writing of their own names, the stories in a storybook, or the pages of their sister's reader. They reached out for or accepted what they wanted and ignored the possibilities that did not suit them. A child who could read helped one who could not. Talking, listening, writing and reading were closely interwoven in proportions which suited the child's interest and need at the moment.

Again, one must be realistic. In each instance, here was a single child living and learning in a situation in which he was responded to as an individual by people who were interested in him, in his interests and his growth and development. A first grade teacher, on the other hand, may have twenty-five children if her school system is an enlightened one and can manage financially to provide her with a reasonable teaching load. There are, unfortunately, all too many schools in which first grade teachers have far too many children to permit the kind of attention to individual children which makes sense in the light of today's knowledge of the wide differences in children's backgrounds, in their language competencies, and in their interest in learning to read. Incredible as it may seem, one finds even today an occasional school system that expends money and effort on remedial reading without putting forth even equivalent effort to make it possible for the teacher of beginners to meet the needs of individual children in order to prevent reading problems that undermine a child's self-concept and his ability to learn.

Some Questions for Teachers To Ponder

Are there ways in which the school experience of a child learning to read can be made to approximate more closely the experience of the child who learns to read before he comes to school? Is it possible to set up a learning environment in a first grade classroom which makes the ability to read so desirable that

children covet it for themselves? Is it possible to use what the child brings of language background as the starting point for his learning to read, actually to go from the known to the unknown? Children come to school knowing many words by ear, tongue and mind; learning to read is learning to know them by eye. Children have learned how to learn what they need and want to learn and to do it independently, effectively and expeditiously. If they want to learn to read they put forth the required effort to achieve their goal.

Perhaps all of these questions and their implications can be reduced to one all-important question, the one with which this article began: Can the emphasis in reading be placed on children's learning to read rather than on the teacher's teaching of reading?

Teachers in many of the primary schools of England are working intensively and creatively on the problem of turning classrooms into workshops and studios where active children working individually or helping each other in a variety of ways assume a large measure of responsibility for their own learning. This author in visits to classrooms in nearly forty English schools found the comment most frequently addressed by teachers to children, "Very good. Carry on!" And the children did carry on thoughtfully, responsibly and pridefully.

In the United States, great emphasis has recently been placed by curriculum makers on discovery and exploration as methods of learning, especially in science and mathematics. Very little of this emphasis has yet found its way into the field of reading. Is there a place for it? Preschool children who learned to read appear to have taken the initiative and done their own selecting of material and their own pacing. Is it possible for a teacher with a roomful of children to encourage them in more of it and guide them in their efforts? It seems almost a truism that what we deeply want for children we find a way to give them in some measure.

Some Established Methods of Teaching Reading

Part I of this bulletin makes clear the fact that there are many ways to teach reading. Some of these are widely used and some found only occasionally. Every method has its ardent advocates and often its equally zealous detractors. Some methods find favor and are used by many schools over a long period of time with periodic internal revisions and improvements. Some burst forth and are enthusiastically picked up by groups here and there but tend to disappear after a time. Without the interest and approval of at least a few respected educators, no method gains wide acceptance nor does it last very long.

Basal reading schemes have held the stage in the schools of the United States for thirty years or more. While there are some differences in the content of basal reader series and slight differences in the sequence of skill development and methodology, all of the series tend to fit a description offered by Sheldon. He says that basal reading programs are concerned with the development of those fundamental habits, attitudes and skills essential to effective silent and oral reading and that the programs rest on the assumption that the skills which are essential to such effective reading are known. He further holds that these fundamental skills are of such nature that a series of books, workbooks, and manuals which present these skills in sequential order is necessary to their development. Proponents of basal methods maintain that an adequate basal reading program provides the requisites of successful growth in comprehension, interpretation, and all aspects of mature reading (10, p. 28). The rationale of

the basal reading approach appears to rest partly on research, partly on experience, and partly on belief. All basal reading approaches tend to be eclectic, emphasizing meaning but giving attention in varying amounts and at various points to phonics and other word recognition and comprehension skills.

Basal reading has become the norm from which new approaches deviate. All new approaches are continuously compared with it through observation, through testing or through some form of controlled research.

One after another, various phonic approaches to reading have kept appearing for more than a century. Horace Mann alluded to the problem in 1837. Though all basal reader systems utilize phonics to a greater or lesser extent, some of the bitter critics of current basal reader programs accuse them of utilizing only, or mainly, "sight word" methods which require children to learn words one at a time and encourage them to guess rather than systematically decode words. The criticism was especially hot and pointed after the appearance of Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read* (5); it was rekindled by Sputnik and is now fanned anew by Jeanne Chall's valuable but provocative book, *Learning To Read: the Great Debate* (2). The concern of some is so great that the editor of the Bulletin of the Council of Basic Education has gone so far as to state:

> It seems to us that anyone who suggests, even by indirection, that the present reading controversy does not involve fundamental issues but merely a reflection of temperamental differences between reading theorists, misreads the true nature of the controversy. There is a real war on in reading, and for the future of American Education it is important that the right side win.

Such vehement espousal of phonics methods and the almost unlimited number which have appeared of phonics systems and reading systems that place heavy emphasis on phonics disturb teachers and others who are convinced that learning to read should be for children a meaningful and enjoyable experience. They are convinced that an exclusive or heavy emphasis on code-breaking is demanding of children an initial period of hard work which can be meaningless drudgery to them and may color very unfavorably their attitude toward the ultimate goal of reading, which is to make of every child a self-motivated reader.

Phonics methods are not the only methods to place heavy emphasis on helping the child to break the code of English reading. The Initial Teaching Alphabet is designed for this purpose and so are the various linguistics approaches. Two other methods described in Part I are basically phonics and fit into the code-emphasis group, *Words in Color* and *Programed Instruction with Reading Material.* All basal reader approaches are designed to teach children ultimately how to decode words, but the critics are convinced that the goal is achieved too slowly and too ineffectively with permanent harm to some children. Newer editions of some basal series are adding more phonics, some of it earlier, and all of them are making what they do with phonics stand out more clearly.

New Approaches—By Whom and Why

Good teachers are never content with their teaching but always on the alert for better ways of teaching all children and for guidance and concrete help with meeting the needs of individual children who for one reason or another have

difficulty with reading. Scholars and others from fields outside of the reading domain are also discontent with reading and some of them are convinced that they have ideas and can produce material that will improve the teaching of reading.

It is interesting to note the major proponents of some of the methods described in Part I. While a language-experience approach is not new, the major instigator of the present widespread interest in it is a curriculum specialist, Roach Van Allen, who began exploring with teachers in San Diego County the possibilities he saw in beginning work in reading by utilizing the children's own interest in creative expression through arts and language. Sir James Pitman, a publisher and member of the British Parliament, devised his Initial Teaching Alphabet to make reading easier for beginners by providing them with one symbol for one sound, a one-to-one relationship, until they have learned to read. The linguistic approaches on the market all stem from the work of Leonard Bloomfield, a linguist and scholar who served on the faculty of Yale University. The major linguist to prepare materials for teaching was Charles C. Fries, a distinguished authority on American English. *Words in Color* is the product of Caleb Cattegno who is even more widely known for his work in the teaching of modern mathematics than in reading. The initiator of the emphasis on *Programed Reading* was a distinguished psychologist, B. F. Skinner. Much of the work and study that has led to special attention to the needs of disadvantaged children in urban centers is the work of sociologists, not educators, though people in reading have attempted to adapt existing material and create new material for use in teaching these children. The talking typewriter is again the work of a psychologist and the computer material the product of specialists in computer programing.

While all of these "outsiders" have been working intently to find better ways to teach children to read, many of the leaders in the field of reading and most teachers have continued to give their allegiance to basal reading plans. To be sure, basal reading methods have been successful in teaching many children to read, perhaps the great majority of them, but all too many children have failed to achieve in line with their ability to learn in other areas and a tragic number of children have failed almost completely. Proof of this failure lies in the present emphasis on the training of more and more remedial reading teachers and directors of reading. Outsiders recognize the tenacity of the adherence to the basal reader concept and are convinced that there must be ways to teach reading which would make so much of remedying unnecessary. They also deplore the willingness of some of the leaders in the field of reading to make teachers docile followers of a prescribed method instead of creative teachers who work independently to meet the needs of each individual child through methods suitable for him.

The Cyclical Recurrence of Ideas

It is true that there are historical cycles of some approaches to reading methods. New ideas come to attention, are tried by a few venturesome people and recede into obscurity, only to recur after a time as new ideas with new and ardent proponents. Why? There may be several reasons for this phenomenon. The fact that such ideas as a modified alphabet for beginners, a reading system based on the nature of the language, more attention to code-breaking or more emphasis on individual differences in learning techniques keep coming to

surface tends to mean that there is basic value in them. This potential value needs to be given thorough and sympathetic attention, time to germinate and grow, opportunity to be tried out in a variety of ways by teachers of differing talents and points of view and with children of different learning abilities and patterns, time for methodology to be explored, and thorough and impartial evaluation over an extended period of time.

More often than not, however, an innovative proposal for the teaching of reading is compared immediately with established basic methods before the new possibility has had time to grow and take on shape and before teachers have had opportunity to try it out in their own individual ways with the children in their classes. Teacher A who has known little or nothing about the new possibility and has had no opportunity to explore it is asked to try the new idea for the year while Teacher B continues her usual teaching as a control. The classes of both teachers are then tested and the results compared.It is almost like comparing the success of a mature, established man with that of a young boy who shows promise but needs time to grow. If the experimental program shows superior results, these are often attributed to the so-called Hawthorne effect of novelty and special attention. If results of both experimental and control groups are similar, teaching returns to its established pattern unless the teacher persists in giving it further attention. If the scores of the experimental group are poorer than those of the control group, the new possibility is usually discarded and teaching goes on as before. The innovative idea disappears from sight, only to be conceived anew at a later time and perhaps on a higher or more practical level by another person dissatisfied with the teaching of reading.

Research Which Compares Methods

Any survey of research in the field of reading reveals a large number of studies that compare the results obtained by one method of teaching reading with results obtained by a contrasting method. The most outstanding example of this is the program financed by the United States Office of Education, which compared methods through twenty-seven separate studies in as many cities, a program that cost American taxpayers more than a million dollars. A few of the advisors who approved the over-all project for the Office of Eduction appeared to be motivated by the hope that the research would indicate which method or methods are most successful in teaching children to read. The studies were carried on in different localities across the country and represented a good geographic distribution. Each study was concerned with a different problem, and the directors of the projects were for the most part college professors or authors of basic reading series. These studies done in the 1964-65 school year all used the same pretests and post-tests but each contained uncontrolled variables such as the amount of time spent on reading and the background and basic competence of the teachers.

Much of this was what Chall has accurately called comparing one ill-defined method with another ill-defined method. Methods that were given the same label differed considerably from one another. Stauffer states, "One is led to believe that the Hawthorne effect was operating because in almost every instance the experimental populations made significantly greater gains than the control populations . . . . In almost every instance in which the basic reader approach was compared with some other approach, the basic reader came out second best." (12, p.v, vi) Fourteen of the studies were later extended through

the second and third grades with no outstanding changes in comparative results.

Two generalizations can safely be drawn from this, the most extensive comparative study of reading methods ever undertaken: (1) It is impossible to meet the needs of all children by any one method, and (2) the most important element in any reading program is the teacher, not the method. A further generalization can reasonably be added. Since it appears that the Hawthorne effect was coupled with the significant gains made by the experimental groups, teachers should be strongly encouraged to try methods of their own based on their study of the children in their own groups, to do bits of action research rather than to follow slavishly the manuals and guides laid down with basal reading systems. If these common-sense findings bear fruit in the schools the cost of the research in money and effort were not wasted.

A further comment by Stauffer is important to consider in this connection. "No single approach in these twenty-seven studies has overcome individual differences or eliminated reading disability at the first grade level." (12, p. vii). The data analysis carried by Bond and Dykstra at the Coordinating Center for the studies indicated that certain combinations of approaches proved more effective in teaching reading than a single specified method in isolation. This makes sense in the light of other conclusions that such pupil characteristics as auditory perception, visual perception, intelligence, preschool experience with print (presumably with books, stories, television, signs, and labels and the like), cultural opportunities and English background are related to success in learning to read (1, pp. 7 & 8). These project directors also concluded that "a more diagnostic approach to both readiness for reading and the teaching of reading is needed."

This research in no way diminishes the value of the materials and methods the schools are now using. It does indicate that more work is needed to do three things: to continue to improve existing materials and methods; to explore and expand newer materials and methods that showed up favorably in the reading studies; and to search ever more earnestly for even better materials and methods that can be used to meet the many and varied needs of individual children in our schools.

Contributions from Allied Fields

Evidence that children's needs cannot be met by strict adherence to any single prescribed method and battery of materials comes from a number of fields that are increasingly recognized as allies of education. In a detailed article in the most recent yearbook on reading, *Innovation and Change in Reading Instruction**, Spache gives attention to a long list of studies in sociology, social psychology, child development, linguistics, psycholinguistics, language development, educational psychology, optometry and opthalmology and clinical psychology, all of which have some bearing on reading (11). The field of neurology could well have been added, since a number of neurologists have for some time been concerned with problems of reading disability.

This mass of new material related to reading should not be overpowering to classroom teachers if they will remember their own special assets. American elementary school teachers of children as a group are more highly educated than almost any other teachers in the world. Four or five years beyond high school as preparation for primary school teaching is unheard of in many

* National Society for the Study of Education, 1968.

countries. Our teachers have studied child development, the psychology of learning, children's literature, the language arts and methods of teaching reading. They have not always had adequate help to understand the application of what they have learned to the needs of children and the educative process, but many of them have made their own skillful applications. Teachers as well as principals, supervisors and curriculum directors, need to read widely in the journals that provide special help in keeping up to date in this field in order to apply the best of what is known in meeting the needs of the children for whom they are responsible.

What, Then, Can Be Said of Method?

Since the child's language is an important part of the teacher's working material, two values can be had simultaneously if the teacher will encourage each child to talk freely and utilize the interests that come to light and some of the talk as the first material for reading. A language approach to reading can be the first step toward any method or material the teacher wants to use or is required to use later on. Children enjoy drawing and painting pictures. Often they can be encouraged to tell about them. If a child says, "This is my dad. He is washing the car," the teacher writes the legend under the child's picture. If the child says, "Here my dog. He bes my friend. He go he house," the teacher writes that, too. At this stage it is important for the child to learn that reading material starts in the head of someone who puts it into words which are then represented by black marks on a page or white marks on a chalkboard. This material read back says just what its creator wanted it to say. Teachers in England tend to start this way in many schools. One of Her Majesty's supervisors cautioned teachers, "No child should be given a printed book until he has made at least one little book of his own and a late developer should probably make five or six little books of his own before being given a printed book."

A language approach to reading is the kind used by the preschool child who learns to read at home through his own curiosity and interest. Its values lie in the fact that it takes the child where he is and helps him link the known to the unknown in language.

Starting with the child's own language enables the teacher to introduce reading, writing, spelling and composition in such manner that even young children can see their value and interrelatedness. In these days of pressure to teach more in every subject, any opportunity that a teacher can find to teach more than one thing at a time is pure gold. Some of the available research on both i/t/a and a language approach to reading indicates that the interest and skill children develop in writing constitute a valuable bonus for the reading program. The study of reading and writing in UNESCO countries reported by William S. Gray in 1956 made it clear that teaching reading and writing in close relationship is the usual pattern in the countries of the world (7). We alone tend to separate out the program for teaching reading, perhaps to its detriment. At least it seems clear that combining them is helpful to many children who show evidence of dyslexia and other reading disability problems.

As a teacher studies her own group of children and their responses and needs, she should feel free to utilize any aspect of method or any combination of methods that seem to bring results. It is interesting to note a contrast in teacher response which visitors to English schools become aware of. If one asks

an American teacher what method she uses to teach reading, she is very likely to respond by naming a series of reading textbooks or individualized reading, a linguistic approach, or some other recognized method. A primary teacher in England is more apt to say, "I use whatever seems to work with a child." It has become customary in many of our schools to teach a system, a method. To reiterate the theme of this article, attention centered on children, not on a teaching process may achieve better results.

Because of the task that society assigns to teachers and schools, methods of teaching must forever be means to an end. Both research and good judgment indicate that there is nothing sacred about any method nor is any method a panacea. A teacher's loyalty, therefore, cannot be to the integrity of a method or set of materials. Her loyalty must be to each child in her class and her effort must be bent in every possible way to the meeting of his needs as he learns to read. The end to be sought is always that of happy, confident children, not only learning to read but learning to love reading and to understand what it contributes to good living.

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